

T. 564-4

D E R W E N T;

AN

O D E.

——— quæ deserta et inhospita tesqua
Credis, amoena vocat, mecum sentit.

HOR.



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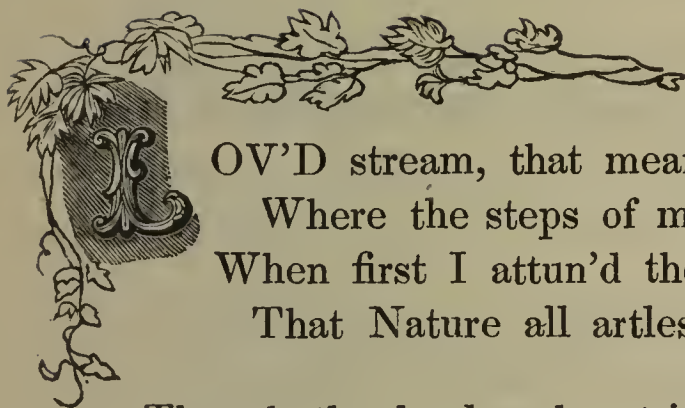
MDCCCXLII.



Derwent;

AN ODE,

[BY JOHN CARR, L. L. D.*]



OV'D stream, that meanders along,
Where the steps of my Infancy stray'd,
When first I attun'd the rude song,
That Nature all artless essay'd;

Though thy borders be stripp'd of each tree,
Where trees were indulg'd to decay,
There image still pictures to me
Thy villagers gamboling gay.

Nor by Fancy shall ought be unseen,
Where thy fountains flow murmuring by,
Where I mix'd in the sports on the green,
Where I wept with the woe-begone eye.

* Dr. Carr was born at Muggleswick, in the county of Durham, in the year 1732. His father was a farmer, and had a small estate of his own, which the Doctor possessed at his death. He received the first rudiments of his education at the village school, and afterwards private instructions from the rev. Daniel Watson, who was then curate of that place. Carr was afterwards sent to St. Paul's school, where he continued longer than boys usually do, as his parents could not afford to send him to either of the Universities. While still young, he became usher or assistant to Dr. Hurst, master of the Grammar

“ Man born unto trouble ” and strife
 Is but little inclin’d to discern,
 That, amidst the hard lessons of life,
 He has still many harder to learn.

Hope calls ; he no longer delays,
 Nor sees how his way is beset,
 Till at length on his happier days
 Out of breath he looks back with regret.

Double ff, I remember you well,
 Double ff, I alone was to blame,
 When your persons, in learning to spell,
 To me seem’d exactly the same.

The dawning of folly or sense,
 Revolutions in Latin or Taw,
 The Pedagogue arm’d in defence
 Of Lily, the fountain of Law ;

Keen enmities lasting an hour,
 Much prose and much verse out of joint ;
 All revive ; and I triumph in power
 To decide between comma and point.

Past rapine arises anew,
 Not a bird can be safe in her nest ;
 That orchard again is in view,
 Those apples were always the best.

The boy quits, enamour’d of ease,
 For thy cool embraces, his book ;
 Thy minnows, that play when they please,
 O Derwent ! how happy they look !

School at Hertford, and eventually succeeded him in that situation, which he held for many years.

In 1781 he was honoured with the degree of L.L.D., from the Marischal College, Aberdeen, through the influence of Dr. Beattie, and as a compliment for his Translation of Lucian, two volumes of which had then issued from the press. Carr was the intimate friend of many of the Literary Characters of that day, and especially of those connected with the county of Durham.

He was the author of many works, but was best known in the Literary world as the translator of Lucian, which was published in five volumes, 8vo., from 1773 to 1798. He died at Hertford on the 6th of June, 1807.

How oft, by no pity controll'd,
 An impaler of brandlings¹ I've been!
 How oft return'd hungry and cold,
 Unburthen'd with booty, I ween!

When thy Hyads impetuously pour'd
 A deluge from ev'ry hill,
 The dams by thy torrents devour'd
 The miller aghast in his mill;

Thy rage did but temper the air;
 Far distant the mildew of Health,
 Where Guilt vainly decorates Care
 Disdaining the gewgaws of wealth.

Fine houses, fine coaches, fine wives,
 Genealogies bought by the yard!
 Why forfeit the peace of your lives,
 Ye wretches, for such a reward?

Far better to perish obscure,
 With ignorance binding your eyes,
 Than to riot on spoils of the poor,
 Than be learned without being wise.

Simplicity heard in her cot
 Long tales of hard winters and wars,
 And still hop'd to better her lot
 By the change of the moon and the stars.

What feats were perform'd in the snow,
 When the track of the hare was descry'd!
 What joys did old Jowler bestow,
 What grief, when the veteran dy'd!

How Derwent for liberty fought,
 Regardless of riches and ease!
 Now liberty's not worth a groat,
 And money corrupts all degrees!

Thus the sages of Derwent find out,
 As the sages of Greece did before,

¹ The brandling is a small worm, which is cleansed in moss, and used as a bait in fishing for trouts.

That Truth may be elbow'd about,
And Honesty kick'd out of door.

As the trout still prefers the clear stream,
As the eel still will bask in the mud,
So this is for ever the theme,
All is over and gone that was good.

For a story they stir up the fire,
Till vanquish'd and silenc'd by sleep;
No vale like their own they admire,
Not a lake in the land like the Sneep¹.

There Derwent reluctantly leaves
A scene so delightfully rare,
And winds his fond arms, and receives
Each wave in the wonder to share.

King Arthur's round-table is near,
Though none has declar'd how it came;
He lifts up his head once a year,
The sceptre long lost to reclaim.

Enchantment its hold must forego,
Could any strong arm draw the sword,
The trumpet could any man blow,
That lie at the feet of their Lord.

Hot Henry, in choler decrees,
His fingers to snap at the Pope;
Alba Landa, embosom'd in trees,
Had well nigh eluded his hope.

Alba Landa's inquisitors made
Small progress in finding the place,
Till a bell² the dread secret betray'd,
Like a Lollard, bereft of all grace.

Hal mynish'd their mete and their wyne,
As the guise of black chronicle saith;

¹ A pool in the river near Muggleswick.

² Harry the Eighth having resolved on demolishing the religious houses, his commissioners are reported, after a long search, to have despaired of finding Alba Landa, or Blanchland; when they were unexpectedly led to it by the sound of a bell.

But could the good fathers repine,
While he stoutly defended the faith?

Rude Muggleswick's ¹ banquetting room,
Which offered a timely retreat,
Reformation thought fit to resume:
Reformers were willing to eat.

Thus the wheel of vicissitude flies,
Something, nothing, Penelope's web!
Let Envy, if Envy be wise,
Spare a Henry, an Arthur, an Eb ².

In elder time Giants uprear'd
Their heads, and affronted the skies;
Cor, Ben, Con, terrifick appear'd,
With names of anomalous size.

A hammer in common they had,
And the use of it easy to all;
Each whistled, each brother was glad
To throw ³ it three leagues at his call.

When Con was approaching his end,
Deaf, blind, and beginning to rave,
With a ploughman he begg'd, as a friend,
To converse at the mouth of his cave.

This ploughman, as prudent men do,
Held his ploughshare, himself to escape;
Blind Con pinch'd his ploughshare in two,
And pronounc'd it the arm of an ape.

The footsteps of Fairy and Fay
In the grassplot are plain to be seen,

¹ At Muggleswick was a house of entertainment for the Monks, the vestiges of which still remain. "Fecit et magnum campanile, organa grandiora, parcas de Beaurepaire et Mukelingeswik, et apud Wardelau cameram, aulam et capellam, quæ Scoti postea destruxerunt, cameram etiam apud Mukelingeswik." Roberti de Greystanes Historia Dunelmensis, in Vita Roberti de Strichille, Anglia Sacra. p. 740.

² Eb, from whom Ebchester has its name, was a royal virgin of great repute.

³ Corbridge, in Northumberland, Conset, and Benfieldside, in Durham, were the places where those brothers resided.

Where at midnight, in dancing the hay,
They lighten the cares of their Queen.

Ghosts and witches came in for a share,
Though poor Frizzle¹ has long breathed her last,
On broomstick who rode in the air,
And scatter'd her pins as she past.

Old saws for a century receiv'd,
Remarks of a mile round about,
Are maxims that must be believ'd,
Are doctrines admitting no doubt.

The dress of the body and mind,
Of father and son is the same ;
Philosophy has not refin'd,
And France is an enemy's name.

What son of thy banks canst thou boast,
Like Maddison,² made to explore,
To give to the silver-girt coast,
The praise that was foreign before ?

Each language, each heart was his own,
And Europe was proud to improve,
Whom Belgium found time to bemoan,
Whom Gallia could listening love.

Say, when wilt thou cease to complain ?
O Derwent ! thy destiny cries :
Far off, on the banks of the Seine,
Thy darling, thy Maddison dies !

¹ Jane Frizzle was a notorious witch on the Northumberland side of the river, who practised on men, maidens, and cattle.

² George Maddison, Esq., the younger son of John and Elizabeth Maddison of Hole House, near Alan's Ford, was private secretary to Sir Joseph York, Bart., and after filling various diplomatic situations, he was appointed in 1782, under secretary of State for the foreign department, and secretary of Legation, under the Duke of Manchester, who negociated the peace of Paris, in 1783 ; where he died suddenly, August 27th, 1783, in the thirty-sixth year of his age. His death has been attributed, but we believe erroneously, to poison, intended for the Duke. See Bell's Rhymes of Northern Bards, p. 294.